1,685 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) on the basis of least quoted subsidy. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and many private service providers had participated in these tenders. The work on the basis of lowest quoted subsidy was awarded to M/s BSNL (1,267 SDCAs for RDELs and 29,794 RCPs) Reliance Infocom Limited (21,459 RCPs and 203 SDCAs for RDELs), Tata Tele-services Limited (172 SDCAs for RDELs) and Tata Tele-services Limited, Maharashtra (43 SDCAs for RDELs).

Computerization of Post Offices

1671. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the 26,000 post offices across the country would be computerized to create a network infrastructure for the postal services;

(b) whether the Prime Minister and the Planning Commission have agreed to extend the financial support of Rs. 625 crore for this purpose; and

(c) the initiatives proposed to re-orient the mail services to meet the competitions of private mailing services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir. In the Tenth Plan, the Department of Posts is implementing a Plan Scheme to computerize and network 7,700 large Departmental Post Offices.

(b) Hon'ble Prime Minister was requested for support and a proposal has been submitted to the Planning Commission for computerization of remaining 18,465 Departmental Post Offices. Planning Commission is examining the proposal.

(c) Value additions like pick up services, carrying out various pre-mailing activities (e.g.addressing, franking, inserting, gumming etc.), intimation of delivery, facility of tracking of Speed Post articles are being provided to the customers to meet the competition from private mailers.